



July 26, 2010

Dear Kitchen Cabinet members,

Why does state government cost so much? With the economic problems facing our state, why is it so difficult for majority budget writers to find areas of government to reduce spending?



How did we get here?

When the 2010 legislative and special sessions ended a little more than three months ago, the majority passed a “three-legged stool” budget which depended on \$480 million in federal money that doesn't appear to be coming after all, expected tax revenue, which just recently was revised downward by nearly \$300 million, and a host of new taxes that may be rejected in November. **It appears that all three legs of the budget stool are about to be cut off.**



That will leave us in a \$3+ billion deficit in just this biennium, which could swell to over \$8 billion by 2013. The governor has said that she'll either consider calling another special session to deal with the problem or simply make across-the-board cuts statewide. **Either way, it is evident that this fiscal fiasco is a major collapse of everything that the majority party had hoped for.** These things on



which their budget depended are simply not coming to fruition. Like the little pig in the nursery rhyme who built his home out of straw, all it took was a huff and a puff from the big, bad wolf to bring down the entire house.

Similarly, the majority party's budget was built on false hopes and broken promises, and when economic reality huffed and puffed, the budget came crashing down. If we have a special session, **it will be an admission by the majority that their policies are abject failures.**

Regardless, I pledge to work with the majority party to make reasonable reductions in various aspects of state government, and I will take the governor at her word that there will be no "sacred cows." Those are certain departments which have historically been protected from cuts. However, a "non-sacred cow" which I'm very concerned about is the Department of Corrections, which has suffered plenty of cuts already. Cutting further from that department will put people at additional risk because of a lack of supervision of inmates being dumped out into the streets. **Any further cuts in that department would put the most fundamental thing the state does even further at risk, and that is keeping the public safe.**

Office of the Governor

Over the last several weeks in these Kitchen Cabinet updates, we've taken a hard look at some areas where the state is perhaps overspending. With less than six months until the 2011 legislative session, it has become very clear that the state is beyond broke and we need to be looking at where all the money goes.



We've looked at the University of Washington, where one professor without tenure makes over **\$715,000 a year in pay and benefits** and dozens more make over a quarter of a million dollars. We've looked at the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts, where more than 80% of their nearly 300 employees make over \$99,000 annually in pay and

benefits. Today, we're looking at the executive branch of government, and I'd suggest one of the first places the governor can look to make cuts is in her own office.

As of 2009, there are 69 people "officially" working in the Office of the Governor. I use the word "officially" in quotes because **over at the Office of Financial Management, there are at least ten people (out of the 350 additional staffers in the department) whose sole job is essentially working for the governor.** They have titles like "*executive policy advisor*" or "*senior executive policy coordinator*" and things like that, and while they may technically get their paychecks from OFM, they don't work for anyone else but the governor's office.

Of the 69 official employees in the Office of the Governor, including the governor herself, 22 make more than \$99,000 in pay and benefits each year. Some of those include the governor's chief of staff and deputy chief of staff, four executive assistants, the mansion coordinator and mansion cook, and at least four communications staffers. **That's 31% of the governor's "official" staff making more than \$99k annually in pay and benefits.** Incidentally, all of the OFM staffers who work solely with the governor make more than \$99 thousand a year in pay and benefits as well.

Next week's revelations

If you want to review the prior Kitchen Cabinet updates we've done, you can find them on my website at www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell. Or, if there is a state agency or department which you'd like me to take a look at in future Kitchen Cabinets, send an e-mail to Carrell.Mike@leg.wa.gov. Next week, I'll be taking a look at some of those so-called "sacred cows" that may avoid budget cuts by the majority party, including the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) and others.



In closing...

If you know someone in our district who might be interested in receiving these updates, please feel free to forward this e-mail to him or her.

You can always find information online by visiting my website at www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell.

As always, if you'd like to contact me you can write, phone, e-mail, or stop by. My office phone number is (360) 786-7654, and my home phone number is (253) 581-2859. Or you can write me at **102 Irv Newhouse Building, P.O. Box 40428, Olympia, WA 98504-0428.**



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Sincerely,

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